

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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BMC NATIONAL COUNCIL

Minutes of the 68th National Council meeting held via Zoom on
Saturday 20 June 2020
9:30am – 1:00pm

In attendance

Voting members:

President	Lynn Robinson	(LR)	Chair
Cymru North Wales	Dan Lane	(DL)	
Cymru South Wales	CJ Griffiths	(CG)	
Cymru South Wales	Steve Quinton	(SQ)	
Lakes & Council Nominated Director	Fiona Sanders	(FS)	
Lakes	Mike Parsons	(MP)	
London & South East	Chris Stone	(CSt)	
London & South East	Robert Dufton	(RD)	
Midlands	Claudia Sarner	(CSa)	
North East	Jon Punshon	(JP)	
North West	Carl Spencer	(CSp)	
Peak	David Brown	(DB)	
Peak	Alison Cairns	(AC)	
South West	Helen Wilson	(HW)	
South West	Philip Wilson	(PW)	
Yorkshire & Deputy President	Andy Syme	(AS)	
Yorkshire	Mick Green	(MG)	

Observers:

Chair, Board of Directors	Gareth Pierce	(GP)	
Nominated Director	Huw Jones	(HJ)	
Nominated Director	Jonathan White	(JW)	
Clubs Committee	Peter Salenieks	(PS)	
Equity Steering Group	Cressida Allwood	(CA)	
Hill Walking Group	Peter Judd	(PJ)	
Land Management Group	Martin Wragg	(MW)	
Mountain Training England	Guy Jarvis	(GJ)	

Others in attendance:

Note Taker	Rob Bishop	(RB)	
Organisational Development Group	Roger Murray	(RM)	
Deputy CEO	Nick Colton	(NC)	

Note: * = supporting paper circulated.

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|-----------|--|----------------|
| 1. | Welcome & apologies for absence | Actions |
| 1.1 | Apologies: Dave Turnbull and Mike Spooner | |
| 2. | Note Conflicts of Interest | |
| 2.1 | None. | |

3. Notes from previous meetings*

3.1 Matters arising: LR has updated the minutes from the 28th March with AC amends. Clarification will be sort around voting. LR to get clarification from AS via Teamwork. An option, when doing an on-line poll, is required for non-voting members. PS suggests a note is added to this for subsequent minutes to clarify how votes are to be understood. FS suggested that this matter is taken offline.

3.1.1 ACTION: AS & LR to look at this issue.

AS & LR

3.1.2 PS highlighted that from the 9th May meeting, the recording of membership retention offer needs confirmation. PS to get wording.

PS

4. Rolling Action Log*

4.1 LR explained how the action log is now in an excel spreadsheet and that is it a rolling log. CSt suggested that the Task Manager option on Teamwork could be used to assign and monitor the actions.

4.1.1 PS raised the concern regarding automated reminders. PS felt that these should not come out via E-mail. LR acknowledged this and stated that they are looking at the best platform.

5. Reports

5.1 President

5.1.1 LR provided a verbal update. The AGM was last Saturday and all resolutions were passed. Questions were still coming through from members and the process for getting them answered was well structured. LR wished to express her thanks to Lucy for all her work and Alvin Foy for making sure the IT worked for the meeting.

5.1.2 LR outlined her commitment to National Volunteer week and how she had been working with Mariella Sullivan on this. LR expressed her thanks to everyone for taking part. LR acknowledged all the recipients of the annual awards following the AGM.

5.1.3 LR explained that the next edition of Summit magazine was going to be digital, however, as requested by NC, a limited number of paper copies were being printed and to contact Emma Travers if people wanted a copy.

5.1.4 Finally, LR told NC that the BMC is now the most popular sporting NGB on YouTube.

5.2 Board of Directors*

5.2.1 GP supplied a written report to the meeting. Staff and finances were highlighted by GP. AS asked the question regarding membership retention. AS wanted to know if we had figures from December? GP explained that he didn't have them to hand. FS mentioned that at the last Board meeting this week that the figure stood at c80k down from 84k in December. JW expressed caution around duplicates and whether December numbers were included in there. HJ explained the mid-point is taken from June 2019 so it's important to look at the same point as these figures fluctuate throughout the year. HW explained the issue is non-renewals and no new members currently, however cancelled members are low. Travel insurance continues to be an issue.

- 5.2.2 PS asked if the report from Alex Messenger had been received. GP explained it had and was an expansion on the previous report and will be reviewed.
- 5.2.3 AC wants more detail on the membership retention scheme. GP explained that the BMC are looking at the retention of cancelled members.
- 5.2.4 DB expressed concern that the last board minutes to be published were from December 2019 and questioned if the rest will be published. GP will follow up on the other minutes. He mentioned that redacted minutes do take time to complete.
- 5.2.5 PS gave a follow up to the question from AC. PS gave an update on furloughed members and offering this to club members. PS pointed out that the mid-term offer is cheaper than the offer to people who had been furloughed. A short paper is going to the Board to correct the situation.
- 5.2.6 CSp requested an update on Blue membership. GP advised it was delayed because of the Covid. RM questioned why this update wasn't received earlier, GP explained that the paper was only received the previous day and is with the board to review.
- 5.3 CEO & Office**
- 5.3.1 Nick Colton stood in for Dave Turnbull and provided a verbal update. Most staff are still working from home and systems are now in place in the office to minimise the Covid-19 risk. Some staff are still furloughed but conversations are starting regarding a return. Some staff will come back on a part-time basis with the rest covered by the furlough scheme.
- 5.3.2 Working with BMC Partners is going really well and the BMC work has been greatly appreciated. The BMC has received many positive comments from the membership. NC mentioned the membership strategy is a live document and if people had ideas to send them through. NC highlighted the need to get the opinions of furloughed staff. The Peak District Wired Guide has gone to print and Rab Carrington had provided an update from the CCPG.
- 5.3.3 The Access team is working really hard on providing guidance. NC explained how the Equity Steering Group is looking at the response to Black Lives Matter and will produce a response. NC highlighted that Rob Bishop has ensured the BMC has signed up to the Sport and Recreation Alliance statement on inequality.
- 5.3.4 NC explained how the Clubs and Huts committee are hoping to have an online session next week. Work is continuing with student clubs. NC highlighted that Sport England funding was due to finish in March 2021 but this has now been rolled over until March 2022.
- 5.3.5 NC acknowledged the great work that is going on from volunteers and noted the website articles and the work of volunteers should be highlighted more.
- 5.3.6 JW mentioned that the Club Huts guidance was going out next week.
- 5.3.7 HW highlighted that there should be a review of paths and name routes.
- 5.4 Partners**

5.4.1 **Mountain Training:** GJ gave a Mountain Training update. He detailed that Covid had a major impact on them with staff being furloughed. Mountain Training England have advised providers that they can start to deliver again. In Wales they were still waiting and that could be two weeks away. The plan is to bring Mountain Training staff back in July, August and September. A lot of consultation is going on with the BMC and other funded partners. This has been a positive out of the current Covid situation and it has allowed everyone to come together. MTE would like it recorded the work and leadership that the BMC has done has and Mountain Training are hugely grateful.

5.4.2 PS thanked GJ for the clear explanation and LR wished to pass on her thank to partner organisations.

5.4.3 **Partners Assembly:** FS provided a written report and highlighted that the PA will be looking into tackling inequality at the September meeting.

5.5 **Update on Covid-19 (Access)**

5.5.1 JP explained that there's a Covid-19 group meeting every Monday chaired by DT with the Access team and Prof Ian Hall and John Cousins from Mountain Training also attend. Legal advice is provided from Martin Wragg. The work of the group was fully loaded towards the start of May and is now starting to slow. Its aim is to give guidelines to hill walkers and climbers.

5.5.2 JP highlighted two issues. 1. A new category of visitor to the outdoors using disposable BBQ's, littering, parking and creating a fire risk. 2. Walls in some countries are already open but not yet in the UK. It is expected that these will open the same time as gyms. The ABC is working on guidance for this.

5.5.3 At this point LR noted the comments on the chat box and will get these saved to Teamwork. LR explained that Hills2Oceans litter picking campaign was looking to relaunch. DB would formally like to thank the Access group and is keen to see the group continue and discuss access issues in general. JP agrees and it has brought people closer together.

A break was taken at 11am.

6. **Organisational Development Group**

6.1 **Future of the ODG***

6.1.1 HW explained how an interim NC meeting had taken place on the 16th June where a draft Members' Council Terms of Reference that MG had been working on was presented. A form was created for everyone to complete regarding the draft. FS questioned if you were on the call did you need to complete? HW stated that would be helpful.

All

6.1.2 FS explained how they were looking at moving to the next phase and was hoping to present this to the AGM. However, with Covid this made it impossible. Despite that a lot of work has continued in the background. The paper is to provide a way forward and a lot of comments received were about the time taken up at area meetings and board regarding the ODG.

6.1.3 FS explained how the ODG needs slimming down to areas that still need work. FS explained that we need to look at completing the work by September. HW outlined that this meant that papers detailing what was going to happen would be completed, not all the ODG work. It was highlighted that a lot of areas will put this out for consultation between September and January.

- 6.1.4 It was felt that in order to gain some traction and enthusiasm for the ODG that positive changes brought about by the ODG should be shared. FS will look to seek approval from National Council.
- 6.1.5 MP mentioned that he felt there was a much stronger BMC being created from the work that has happened first with the ORG and then ODG.
- 6.1.6 From the paper AC wanted to know who would be taking item 1.4 forward and how it would happen. FS explained how everything will be distributed to the right people to get the work done. FS did acknowledge some work cannot move at present but will look to give an indication when this will be possible.
- 6.1.7 AC wanted to know who would be responsible if the ODG work takes a back seat. FS mentioned phase 3 and the first objective is to monitor that things are being done.
- 6.1.8 PS stated it was great to see we could measure process. PJ questioned how we will establish an ethics and culture for the ODG work to take root. FS mentioned that a lot of work had gone into this including surveys and strategic reviews. FS pointed out that the culture will come from the Board and SMT.
- 6.1.9 LR took a poll to support the paper:
Yes – 16; No – 0; Abstain – 1; Non-Voting Members – 9.

6.2 Clubs Strategy*

- 6.2.1 PS presented the clubs strategy paper. He was pleased to see triple digit replies from clubs for feedback. Changes will be incorporated by the BMC who will facilitate this process.
- 6.2.2 A poll was taken to endorse the strategy for clubs:
Yes – 16; No – 0; Abstain – 1; Non-Voting Members – 11.

6.3 Feedback from Partners Assembly

- 6.3.1 FS gave verbal feedback that a good meeting took place in the previous week. Thanks to RB for developing the group. FS was impressed with the level of dialogue. The PA will focus on two main areas for the September and October meetings; response to under-privileged groups and the development of a climate code.

7. Access Management Group – position statement on raptor persecution*

- 7.1 AT joined the meeting at 11.48. AT has provided a paper and welcomed feedback. PJ was delighted to see the BMC take a stance on Grouse Moors. He did conceive that the membership will probably look for an outright ban. PJ supports the paper.
- 7.1.1 PS mentioned whether we should define what we mean by government and the mechanism going forward. AT takes the point about Wales.
- 7.1.2 LR thanked AT and the Access Management Group for their work on this.
- 7.1.3 A poll was taken to gauge support for the paper:
Yes – 17; No – 0; Abstain – 0; Non-Voting Members – 11.
- 7.1.4 CG questioned whether there was any guidance on illegal trapping and what to do if someone came across it. AT will find out although stated it would probably be calling 101 and reporting it to the police.

- 7.1.5 CG would like to see guidance go out to members. MW highlighted the issues around Buxton. MW explained you should photo the trap or snare but be aware of people who maybe around at the time.

8. Equity Steering Group

- 8.1 CA wanted to acknowledge the hard work done by James McHaffie which has led to the BMC being awarded the Sport England intermediate standard. The ESG is currently working on a number of areas, mental health, BAME and hard to reach groups. PS was delighted to see the work being completed on mental health. HW questioned whether inappropriate route names are being looked at, CA mentioned this is something they will look into. CA

- 8.1.1 DB wanted to know if there was anything the group would like from a National Council point of view. CA asked if local areas could detail local routes, this is then something we can look at. RB highlighted that James will not be working of equality issues alone and will have the full support of Mariella Sullivan.

9. Area Meetings evaluation*

- 9.1 LR explained how area meetings had all taken place virtually via Zoom. CSt has carried out an evaluation following these. CSt asked whether we should review this now and then complete another review in six months' time.

- 9.1.1 CSt provided a paper on the review of area meetings. CSt would like to thank all the area reps and staff for all the work they did on this.

- 9.1.2 In summary, the highlights were:
- 150 replies were received.
 - Attendance on Zoom meant it was the highest attended area meetings since October 2018.
 - 7 increased in attendance, 1 the same and the Peak and North East was down (this could have been down to the fantastic weather).
 - Over half were new attendees to area meetings or not been for 12 months.
 - Very few technical difficulties.
 - Over 73% had a high satisfaction rate.
 - 100% would attend again.
 - Downward trend in attendance at area meetings.

- 9.1.3 It was felt that to a single-issue webinar could be set up to discuss further. LR agreed. LR

- 9.1.4 CG mentioned that it was great report and thanked CSt.

10. Reports from Local Area Representatives

- 10.1 LR noted that 3 area reports were in. LR asked if there was anything critical from them.

- 10.1.1 CSa highlighted that one member was looking to campaign on the use of old railways. NC suggested getting in touch with Rob Dyer about this.

- 10.1.2 SQ noted that the Respect the Rock has led to more positive relationships.

- 10.1.3 DL highlighted the issue around windfarm instillation.

- 10.1.4 DB noted highlighted that the use of old railways has led to public enquiries. This was in relation to the Buxton to Matlock line. He highlighted the Woodhead pass consultation.
- 10.1.5 DB enquired whether area meetings should decide what campaigns we should get involved in.
- 10.1.6 FS will support DB and questioned whether this should be under AMG.
- 10.1.7 CSt wanted to thank the office staff for the films made on the Southern Sandstone.
- 10.1.8 ACTION: AMG should detail what campaigns they should get involved with and why.
- 10.1.9 JP noted that Steve Blake has taken upon himself to give a crag-by-crag update which has been fantastic.

AT

11. Forward Plan for National Council meetings*

- 11.1 LR presented an excel document that she had created outlining what needs to go to National Council, linking in with the Board Forward Plan and Reserved Matters. The development of this is on-going.

12. Deputy President

- 12.1 LR will consider how to take this forward but AS will continue for the next month or so. A group will look into how to take this role forward. FS stated this should be done ASAP. LR, AS and one other will look into this. LR has asked for volunteers to come forward.

LR, AS &
BB

- 12.1.1 Post-meeting note – Bill Beveridge volunteered.

13. Any Other Business

- 13.1 No AOB issues were raised.

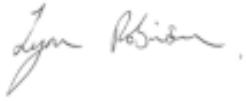
14. Next steps, close of meeting, and date & venue of next meeting

- 14.1 The next meeting will be held on Saturday 19 September 2020.
- 14.1.1 Meeting closed at 1.02pm.

Summary of action points from the 68th meeting:

Ref	Action	Who	By
3.1.1	AS & LR to look at the issue re online polls	AS & LR	ASAP
3.1.2	Wording regarding the membership retention offer	PS	ASASP
6.1.1	To feed back comments on the draft MC ToR	All	ASAP
8.1	Equity Steering Group to review the issue of route names	CA	Ongoing
9.1.3	Webinar to be set up to discuss local area meeting evaluation.	LR	ASAP
10.1.8	AMG to detail what campaigns they should get involved with and why.	AT	Next AMG
12.1	To review Deputy President paper	LR, AS, BB	19 Sep

The above was accepted as an accurate record of the meeting:



Signed: Lynn Robinson, President

Date: 19th September, 2020